The New Clarion

By WILL N. HARBEN

(Continued.)

Howard suddenly faced the old man.

"I see," Howard muttered in what was almost a groan. "They are not even going to give me personally a chance to work up proof of my innocence. I'll be wholly dependent on my friends, and that hurts—that cuts to the quick. But, above all—let me say it now, Uncle Abner—I shall think more of your pain and my mother's than all the rest put together."

"You won't suffer long," Abner gulped. "Me an' Billy an' Pole Baker will turn the earth upside down or find the guilty man. All we want you to do is to be patient an' trust us. Keep yore soul pure an' sweet under this calamity."

There was a step on the stair below.

"They are coming," Howard said.

"Yes, that's them," Abner agreed.

The next minute Jeff Dill, the sheriff, a tall, thin man of middle age, and Jim Tibbs, his deputy, a young man, came in, their faces set grimly. Dill let his shrinking glance fall on Howard's steady eyes.

"I reckon you know why we've come, Howard," he began awkwardly.

Howard nodded. "Yes, I know."

"The Lord knows I hate my part of it," Dill went on, with averted eyes. "Nobody knows better 'n me an' Jim here what a tough customer Fred Craig was. Ef you hadn't done it somebody else would have been sure sooner or later to"—

"Stop!" Abner flared up. "That's a purty way fer an officer to talk. Howard ain't been found guilty yit, thank God."

"I'm sorry," Dill said, in no little confusion. "It is reported out in town that Howard has admitted it to several an' naturally I thought"—

"Well, he hain't admitted it to nobody," Abner fumed. "He's as innocent of it as I am. You kin hear black is white in a town full o' tattlers like this un. Folks want to believe the worst they kin agin anybody that's tryin' to do right an' rise above the common level."

"Never mind, Dill," Howard put in bravely. "It is natural for you to believe I did it, and no harm has been done. I'm ready to go with you."

Dill fumbled a parcel wrapped in brown paper and tied with a piece of twine. As he unrolled it the links of a steel chain clinked and a pair of new handcuffs came into view.

"Will that be necessary?" Howard asked, forcing a smile. "I don't intend to try to—to get away."

"I'm afraid it is, Howard," the sheriff returned.

"Oh, it's all right," Howard said quickly. "I am no better than any other prisoner." And as he spoke he extended his arms. He was wearing a thin office coat, and Dill glanced from it to another hanging from a nail on the wall.

"If you want to put on yore other coat," he said, "you'd better do it before the cuffs are on. You can't git yore arms through the sleeves unless you do."

"I see." Howard's eyes met Abner's. The old man's held a stare that was too full of pain to be described.

"Do you happen to know if my mother is in town?" Howard asked the sheriff.

"No, she ain't yet," was the reply; "but somebody passed yore pa an' her on the road just now a mile or so back, an' that's why me an' Tibbs decided to hurry. I didn't think you'd like to let her see you go through town like this."

"You are right," Howard answered.

Abner remained in the office. As the clatter of steps died away from the stairs, and the fainter ones from the sidewalk below, he sat down at his table and raised his hands to his deadwhite face.

"Lord God Almighty," he prayed. "Thou who rulest the universe an' taketh account o' the happenin's on all thy countless planets, as well as on this tiny ball o' ourn, give me faith, strength an' courage in this black hour. 'Help thou my unbelief.' Give me strength an' show me the way to right this awful wrong agin that pore boy, who shorely is yore child ef anybody is."

Some one came in, and, looking up, Abner saw Lizzie Swayne putting her hat on a shelf above her desk. She was sobbing softly.

* * * * * * * *

The news of Howard Tinsley's arrest spread rapidly through the town and out into the country. Nothing else was mentioned where persons would hail each other on the roads or meet face to face in the streets.

Some of Howard's social friends were gathered in the old fashioned town hall at a rehearsal of a drama, which was to be given in benefit of a fund which was being raised to improve the condition of the Confederate soldiers' graveyard, which, full of unmarked mounds, lay just outside the town.

Cora Langham had agreed to take a part, and with some of the other players was in the auditorium when Frank Reymond came in hurriedly.

"It is all up with Howard," he announced. "They've just taken him on to jail."

Cora turned white and had a sensation like that of fainting, but so great was the interest in what Reymond was saying that no one noticed her condition. That part of the cast who were behind the cracked and marred scenery studying their lines left the stage and gathered around Frank, listening breathlessly to his description of their friend's humiliation. The young ladies, as a rule, stood out for Howard's innocence, but the young men remained silent.

Presently the stage director called them to order, and those who were needed went behind the scenes. Cora found herself alone with Reymond.

"I'm telegraphing it to all my papers," he said. "It is a big item. Editors all over the state are watching Howard's work and quoting him."

When Reymond had gone Cora managed to leave the hall unnoticed. She had never felt so queer before. In fact, she was half dazed. At the foot of the stairs she met her mother, who had come for her.

"I want to see you, dear," Mrs. Langham said in suppressed excitement. "Let's go to the hotel. Hold your head up. Don't you see that group at the postoffice? They will all be looking at us."

"Why should they look at us?" Cora asked listlessly.

"Because they will. They even stared at me, and when they see us together they will stare more than ever. Come on; I'll explain what I mean later. Don't look at them. You've got yourself into this, now you've got to get out of it."

"I don't know what you mean, mother," Cora said feebly as she was hurried across the street.

"Well, I know what I mean, if you don't," Mrs. Langham answered impatiently. "Come on!"

CHAPTER XIX.

In a Prison Cell.

MRS. LANGHAM led her daughter straight to her room, and when they were inside she closed the door and sank into a chair, panting from her rapid walk.

"What is it, mother?" Cora demanded.

"You ought to understand, heaven knows!" Mrs. Langham cried. "Haven't you heard about Howard Tinsley?"

"Yes, but what"—

"Well, you have ordinary sense, I'm sure," Mrs. Langham flared out. "This whole town and a few even down at home have been connecting your name with that boy's for the last two months. I said nothing because you've had harmless affairs with all sorts of young men everywhere we've ever spent the summer. But this is different. You've entertained him at our house. The Atlanta papers, because he was a sort of editor, made mention of his visit to us. We are tied up in this terrible affair, I tell you. Your father will be furious enough to disown you, and folks in the hotel here are actually asking me if you and that young jailbird are not engaged."

Stunned beyond utterance over what had happened prior to this tirade, Cora sank into a chair near a window. She could think of only one thing now, and that was the calamity which had befallen her friend.

"Why don't you talk? Say something, for God's sake!" Mrs. Langham groaned. "What are we going to do?"

"Do? Why, mother, what can we do? It is not our fault. We can't help what"—

"We can do something, and we must do something, and without delay," the older woman broke in. "We can pack as quickly as possible and get away from this silly town. The papers will announce our return to Atlanta, and the public will at least know that we are not here backing the man up, no matter what the gossips may try to make out of his past attentions to you. If we stay here they will say you are heartbroken. And who do you think would care to marry a girl under a cloud like that?"

"So you would have me turn against him the moment he is in trouble," Cora answered. "Howard will know why we left town, and that will add to his humiliation. He may be innocent, mother. They say he denies it outright."

"Of course he would deny it! What fool wouldn't under the circumstances? Don't argue with me, Cora. I'm your mother, and right now I have a clearer head than you have. You will live to see the day you will be glad I forced you to be sensible. We've got to get away today on the first train."

"Do you mean to say that you actually want to stay?" Mrs. Langham exclaimed, rising and striding heavily to her daughter's chair and standing over her.

"I don't know what I want," Cora muttered despondently. "I don't—don't know how I feel toward him. I don't know my own heart. I don't know that I have a heart like most girls, but I know I am sorry for Howard and do not want to accuse him by running away like this. His other friends"—Cora was thinking in dismay of Mary Trumbley—"will not turn against him."

"What if they don't?" burst from the desperate matron's lips. "What have they got at stake? Who ever heard of them outside of this little town? It is different with you. The papers will want to make as much sensation as they can out of it. I see the line they will pursue. They will say that a popular Atlanta girl is staying here to be near to him, taking flowers and delicacies to his cell every day. You've got to be sensible."

Out of breath Mrs. Langdon paused. Cora sat mute, pale and almost quivering for several minutes. Then she arose. She drew herself up to her full height, and, going to her bureau, she looked at her face in the mirror. Taking up a powder puff, she applied some pink powder to her cheeks and gently touched it with her handkerchief.

Cora faced her mother calmly. "Yes, I've got to decide—I've got to be sensible and have it over with," she said deliberately. "He and I are not engaged. He has never even said in so many words that he loved me. It was just a game, mother; but it was the most interesting one I was ever in. I know his worth, and if he were to tell me he is innocent I'd believe him. I have been spoiled all my life, but I long for something more genuine and

"So you would have me turn against him the moment he is in trouble," Cora answered.

deeper than I have ever had. Every other man that is attracted to me has been attracted by my position and money, but it was not so with Howard. All along I have seen that he despised what I have. All along I have seen that if I could have thrown it away and become, of my own volition, as poor as he is for his sake, he would have loved me. But I am not unselfish enough. There is a streak of the practical—the habit of grasping the safe side—in me which came from you or father, or both, that holds me in check.

"You needn't be afraid that I will act foolishly," she went on. "I loathe myself for it, but when I heard of the murder and the likelihood of Howard's arrest my first thought was of myself. I shall look out for our interests as carefully as you would."

"You've got a lot more sense than I gave you credit for having," Mrs. Langham breathed, in relief.

"I have less heart, that's all," Cora said bitterly. "I begin to think that the possession of material advantages in life means doing without something finer and more lasting. I got that from Howard. He reads, and I don't. I'll either not marry at all or I'll marry without deep love or even admiration. Mother, Mary Trumbley—the girl you admired—loves Howard unselfishly. She would go to jail with him today if she had a chance. It may be that he will establish his innocence. It may be that she will help him do it, and then"—

"They will marry and be happy ever afterward," Mrs. Langham made the jest in sheer elation over her daughter's precaution.

"Yes," Cora replied, "and prove by a life of genuine happiness and wholesome simplicity that the thing you and I strive for and hold so tightly is worthless—absolutely worthless. But that is neither here nor there," Cora sighed. "All of us who are born to the possession of means enough to insure us a life of empty idleness simply go without a higher life. I heard a sermon once about Christ and the rich young man. I now see that the young man was simply bound hand and foot by the belief that he could not do without the very things I am clinging to. Christ was doing without wealth, and he knew the spiritual freedom of it. You and I and father and all our set in Atlanta are slaves. A person striving to acquire money would laugh at this statement, but one striving for spiritual possessions would know what I mean. I am swaying between two desires. I'm tired and sick—young as I am, I'm tired and sick of the life we live. The lives of these mountain people contrasted to my own make my heart ache from sheer emptiness. Somethings tells me that if I had been born here of poor parents Howard Tinsley and I would be fighting the obstacles of life side by side"—

"For heaven's sake, what is the matter with you?" Mrs. Langham interrupted. "You are not like yourself."

"I really don't want to be like my old self," Cora answered, her pretty lips twitching. "But you need not be afraid. I shall do as you wish. I shall do it because there is nothing else for a woman in my position to do—because, in a sense, it is my duty."

"Then we'll pack up at once," Mrs. Langham said, with a deep breath.

"No. Listen, mother." Cora turned square around. "I am able to see both sides of the matter. If I were to give up my part in the play that the young people are getting up and run off today there really would be room for talk. If we stay on here and act as if we have no vital connection with the—the awful affair, no one will dare to—to connect my name with it either here or down at home."

"You may be right," the older woman agreed. "Now that I think of it, your father would wonder why we changed our plans, for I wrote him only the other day that we'd stay another month."

"Yes, we'll stay," Cora said firmly. "Now, I'm going back to the hall. They will need me to go over my part with the rest. Mother, you can trust me. I shan't make a fool of myself."

Mrs. Tinsley soon visited Howard in his cell and was glad to find him confident of a speedy release.

(To Be Continued.)

Coal is selling at $40 per ton in Italy.

KAISER ATTENDS SERVICES WHERE NAPOLEON PRAYED

Little Russian Town For Second Time in Century Visited by a Conqueror.

Vilna, Russia, Jan. 18.—Just a little more than a century after Napoleon victoriously entered this little Russian town, a second emperor of an enemy country paid it a visit, and worshipped in the tiny Protestant church here. The emperor on this occasion was the German Kaiser.

Vilna, in mid-December, was gaily decked in honor of the Kaiser's coming.

Whole companies and regiments of troops lined the streets. Quite as many civilians looked eagerly from their windows for a glance at the man of whom they had heard so much and who, suddenly, had come to play such a large part in their lives.

Between tense lines of soldiers the Kaiser rode to the little church which in 1812, victorious Napoleon had visited, and listened to a brief sermon in which the pastor spoke of the despair of the modern world at the present war between Christian peoples and the apparent inability of anyone to stop it.

Prior to the Kaiser's arrival the civil population of Vilna had, for the most part remained indoors and had contented itself with glimpses through shaded windows. When he left the little church, however, the people streamed out into the streets, and were massed along the way to the Schlossberg, an old ruin of a castle near which he was to review his troops.

In the throng were men whose fathers had seen Napoleon's entry into Vilna, but who never had expected that in their lifetime another emperor than their own would visit the town. It was a curious, silent throng through which the Kaiser rode, a crowd of undemonstrative old men, women and children trying to form some sort of opinion about their conqueror and over-lord.

MANUFACTURING SIN.

(Chicago Tribune.)

Painting the horrors of many pleasant indulgences, such as smoking and dancing, drinking and going to movie shows, has been the occupation of many of our reformers for twenty or thirty years. We are pretty well awake to the dangers which lurk for our impressionable and suggestible city youth. We know the danger of masquerade balls, and all the degrading evils of close dancing have been borne in upon us. The pictures offered us include descriptions of weeping mothers and fathers speaking with tremulous voices. It is all agitating, and we wipe out one sin factory after another.

But the question cannot help presenting itself whether or not these agitated defenders of virtue are not themselves in the business of manufacturing sin.

An unfortunate pedagogue, whose son is under arrest, attributes his downfall to the early use of cigarettes. Cigarettes more than any other single influence wreck the lives of boys in his opinion. He has probably opposed cigarettes all his life.

But was it not the prohibition rather than the cigarettes themselves that wrecked the lift of his boy?

If society were to prohibit, to take an extreme case, any removal of headgear in public places, if society came to regard such an act as immoral and destructive through rendering the offender liable to colds in the head, would not the violators of this rule of conduct be led to more and more despicable things? By denouncing the cigarette smoker and classifying him with the backsliders on the way to perdition, the simple and pleasurable operation of smoking a cigarette must be done in secret—the smoker is to a certain extent an outlaw and ready for more distinctly unsocial things.

Our evangelization of the liquor problem has left us with the spectacle of more prohibition and also more drunkenness. If any headway has been made gaainst these habits, we suspect it is because they are inefficient, not because they are morally degrading. For do not our reformers to some extent manufacture sin and make outcasts?

GIRLS WHO PLANTED SACRED RICE RECEIVE MANY OFFERS TO WED

Tokio, Jan. 18.—The Japanese virgins who planted the sacred rice used during the recent coronation of Emperor Yoshihito have received countless offers of marriage from all parts of the Empire and the young men who tended the sacred rice have been invited by prominent families to become adopted sons. Participation in the holy rites of the coronation is supposed to be accompanied by many blessings and the young women and men who had to do with the sacred rice are very greatly respected. Many of the girls have already been wedded.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, DISTRICT OF BRIDGEPORT, ss PROBATE COURT.
January 14, 1916.

Estate of Margaret Lyon, late of the town of Bridgeport in said district deceased.

The Court of Probate for the District of Bridgeport, hath limited and allowed six months from the date hereof for Creditors of said Estate to exhibit their claims for settlement. Those who neglect to present their accounts, properly attested, within said time, will be debarred a recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate are requested to make immediate payment to

JOHN P. KEMPLE,
Executor.
376 Warren street. P 15 s*p

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, DISTRICT OF BRIDGEPORT, ss., PROBATE COURT.
December, 28, 1915.

Estate of Joseph Cipolla, late of the town of Bridgeport in said district, deceased.

The Court of Probate for the District of Bridgeport, hath limited and allowed six months from the date hereof for Creditors of said Estate to exhibit their claims for settlement. Those who neglect to present their accounts, properly attested, within said time, will be debarred a recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate are requested to make immediate payment to

CHARLES P. CIPOLLA,
Administrator,
137 Huntington Road, City.
A 15 s*